

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration

Department of Energy



Proposed Action: Property and Easement Acquisition, Flathead-Hot Springs and Kalispell-Kerr Transmission Lines

Project No.: TER ID 12-0322

Project Manager: Amanda Williams

Location: Lake County, Montana

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B1.24 Property Transfers

Description of the Proposed Action: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) proposes to purchase one tax lot, 5 acres in size, and a transmission line easement from two private landowners. Purchasing the tax lot and easement will ensure BPA can access its existing Kalispell-Kerr 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line and Flathead-Hot Springs 230 kV transmission line transmission structures, and operate and maintain the lines in the future. BPA would not acquire any groundwater or mineral rights.

BPA will conduct environmental analysis for any proposed facility or new construction within the tax lot and easement if and when the actions are proposed.

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) of the Department of Energy's (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations (57 FR 15144, Apr. 24, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 36221-36243, July 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011), BPA has determined that the proposed action:

- (1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D (see attached Environmental Checklist);
- (2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

/s/ Justin Moffett

Justin Moffett

Environmental Protection Specialist

Concur:

/s/ Sarah T. Biegel

Sarah T. Biegel
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 11/20/2017

Attachment(s): Environmental Checklist

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Checklist

This checklist documents environmental considerations for the proposed project and explains why the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

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Project Site Description

The three tax lots consist of grasslands that have been utilized for animal grazing and pasture. As a result, much of the vegetation consists of non-native and invasive grass and forb species.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

Environmental Resource Impacts	No Potential for Significance	No Potential for Significance, with Conditions
1. Historic and Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance proposed; property acquisition only.		
2. Geology and Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance proposed; property acquisition only.		
3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance proposed; property acquisition only.		
4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance proposed; property acquisition only.		
5. Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish (including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u> No ground disturbance proposed; property acquisition only.		
6. Wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Explanation:</u>		

No ground disturbance proposed; property acquisition only.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**



Explanation:

No ground disturbance proposed; property acquisition only.

8. **Land Use and Specially Designated Areas**



Explanation:

No ground disturbance proposed; property acquisition only. There is no underlying special land use designation that would change as a result of the purchase.

9. **Visual Quality**



Explanation:

No ground disturbance proposed; property acquisition only.

10. **Air Quality**



Explanation:

No ground disturbance proposed; property acquisition only.

11. **Noise**



Explanation:

No ground disturbance proposed; property acquisition only.

12. **Human Health and Safety**



Explanation:

No ground disturbance proposed; property acquisition only.

Evaluation of Other Integral Elements

The proposed project would also meet conditions that are integral elements of the categorical exclusion. The project would not:

- Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.

Explanation, if necessary:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description:

BPA has worked with the landowners to secure the property and easement.

Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts to any environmentally sensitive resource.

Signed: /s/ Justin Moffett
Justin Moffett ECT-4

Date: 11/20/2017